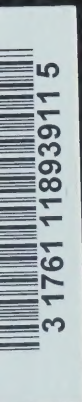
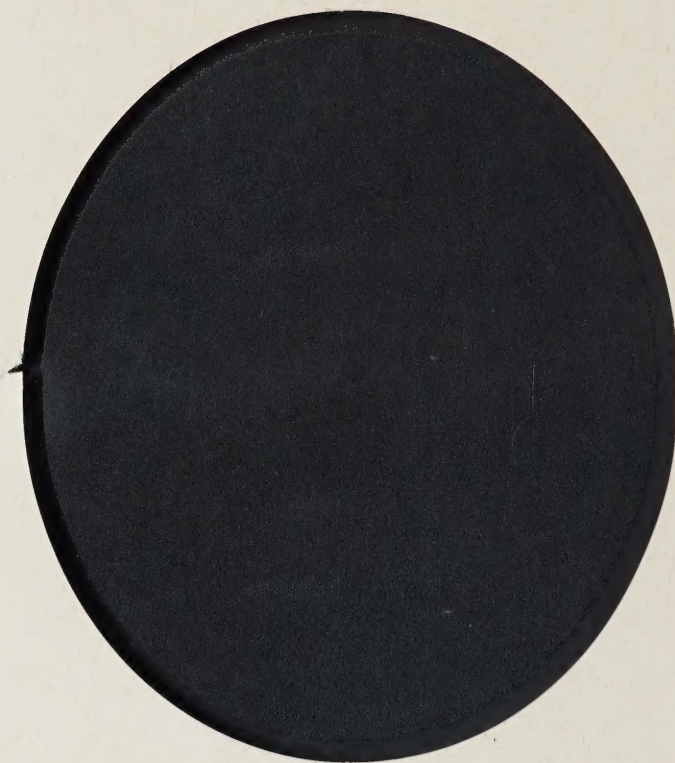


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The Job Search



Ontario Women's Bureau

[General publications]

[G-7] The job search



This booklet is for the mature woman,
especially those returning to the work force.

It describes the necessary steps to
successful job hunting; including self-assessment,
analysis of job expectations and the search itself.

1. Groundwork



Finding a job that suits you requires careful planning. Before you begin your job hunt, decide what kind of work you would like, what you can offer an employer, what you expect of your career and consider the effect employment will have on your budget.

Self Assessment

This is a step-by-step examination of your qualifications and experience. You may find it time-consuming and difficult at first, but it is the most important stage in the groundwork for your job search. Planning now will help you avoid disappointment or unnecessary confusion later in your career.

☐ Begin by making a note of the main details of your education, previous employment, volunteer work, home management and special interests. Don't overlook the importance of any experience.

☐ Using this information, identify your strong points, distinguishing between skills, aptitudes and other assets:

Skills—you may have acquired specific

skills through training or experience—accounting, typing, nursing or computer programming, for instance.

Aptitudes—looking over your experience will also help you identify the type of work for which you have an aptitude—if you have a knack for mathematics, for instance, you may be suited for a career as a statistician or engineer.

Other assets—through volunteer work or previous employment you may have developed other abilities—organizational or supervisory, for example.

If there are areas where you lack confidence, note these too. Don't sell yourself short, but don't over-estimate your qualifications either. The purpose of this self-examination is to help you make a realistic career choice, so try to be honest with yourself. No one but you need see this assessment.

At this stage, free vocational counselling from a community college or other community agency could be very helpful.



Choosing a career

Once you have determined where your interests lie, look into a wide range of careers. Ask for career information at the public library, a community college or the Ontario Women's Bureau. Find out what various careers involve, what qualifications or retraining you would need and whether job prospects are good.

Above all, don't feel you must stick to the traditional 'female' jobs. If you make a realistic choice it's your ability to do the job that counts rather than your sex.

Even with previous experience you may need a refresher course to upgrade your skills or give you more confidence. If you are planning to change careers you will probably need to spend more time re-training. Don't worry about going back to school—your maturity can be an advantage. After the initial adjustment, mature women usually do well as students and workers. Some colleges and universities offer orientation courses designed to assist the mature

person with this adjustment. However, choose your courses carefully and be sure the training program will qualify you for employment.

Job Expectations

Ask yourself what you expect in terms of hours, working conditions and salary. Whether you want full or part-time work will likely depend on your reasons for job-hunting and your family responsibilities, but also consider:

- the location you would prefer
- whether you would be free to travel
- how much responsibility you want
- if you want the opportunity to advance later
- whether you prefer the atmosphere of a small or large organization
- what salary you can reasonably expect.

Budgeting

Consider the practical effect of your employment on the family budget, taking into



account time as well as extra expenses.

☐ If you are married, some deductions — hospital insurance for instance — can be taken from your own or your husband's paycheque, but Unemployment Insurance premiums and Canada Pension Plan contributions are usually paid by each employee.

☐ Check into your particular income tax situation with the District Taxation Office — don't overlook tax exemptions for child care.

☐ You should also plan for:

Transportation

Consider travel time and cost.

Lunches

A packed lunch can cut costs.

Clothing

Will you need a new or more extensive wardrobe?

Household expenses

You may need to make more use of laundries and dry cleaners. Buying prepared or frozen food products will save time but may be expensive. Other household help may also be necessary.

Child care

Remember after school hours, sick days and holidays for the older child as well as day care for the pre-schooler. Contact the Day Nurseries Branch of the Ministry of Community & Social Services for information.

2. The Search



Now you are ready to begin your search. Once again, plan carefully and don't be in too much of a hurry. A successful search takes time.

- ☐ Begin by preparing a résumé.
- ☐ Then explore employment opportunities in your area.
- ☐ Finally, apply for specific positions.

The résumé

This is a brief outline of your education and experience in both paid and volunteer work. Be sure to include everything that could assist an employer to decide whether or not you are the best candidate for the job.

Be explicit—describe what you have actually done. If you've done clerical work, mention in which department—personnel or accounting, for example—and outline your duties. If you were a computer programmer, describe the types of jobs you have had and indicate with which computer languages you have had experience.

You should emphasize those aspects of

your experience relevant to each job for which you apply.

Don't include references—wait until the interview.

Always send original, error-free, type-written copies or good reproductions of your résumé—no carbon copies.

Where to find job leads

☐ Discuss your plans with friends who are employed—they may have some suggestions.

☐ Register with your local Canada Manpower Centre and keep in touch with your counsellor.

☐ Read through all the local newspapers, particularly the business sections, for news of companies or organizations opening up in your area.

☐ Study all the job advertisements in the newspapers, not just those of interest to you. You'll get a picture of the current job market, types of positions available, salaries and what qualifications are required.

RÉSUMÉ

NAME

Address:

Telephone No. Home:

Bus:

Date of birth (optional):

EDUCATION

List your most recent education first and work back. Include: names and addresses; dates of attendance; degrees, diplomas or certificates awarded, and/or individual courses completed.

For example:

Name of school, address, dates.
Diploma (major subjects)

WORK EXPERIENCE

List your current or most recent job first. Include: title of position; name and address of the company for which you worked; dates of your employment, and a brief but detailed description of your work.

For example:

Position, name of company, address, dates.
Description of your work
Conclude by indicating whether the job was full or part-time.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Information regarding your volunteer experience should be presented in much the same way as work experience.

(OTHER SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE)

You may wish to add another section (using an appropriate heading) to cover other skills, experience or memberships in associations (business, trade or professional, perhaps). A brief paragraph should be enough.



☐ Talk to commercial employment agencies and register with those you think would be most useful. Names and addresses are in the Yellow Pages.

☐ Contact the personnel offices of companies and government or private organizations where you might like to work. If they give you an application form, complete and return it promptly, with a copy of your résumé if you have not already sent one to the company.

Applying for the job

There are two ways to look for employment. You can either apply for advertised positions or simply approach a company or organization which has not advertised but where you might like to work.

In either case if you are making written application, send a copy of your résumé with a brief typewritten covering letter to the personnel director or, in some cases, to the director of a particular department.

If you are answering an advertisement,

in your covering letter

- ☐ say when and where it appeared
- ☐ discuss your qualifications and experience—briefly as details are in your résumé
- ☐ say why you are interested in the position
- ☐ finally, say you would be interested in an interview and will telephone for a possible appointment.

If you are applying to companies or organizations where you don't know of definite openings, in your covering letter

- ☐ ask about employment opportunities
- ☐ outline your qualifications

Keep a carbon copy of each letter to better organize your job search.

In some cases you may prefer a more personal approach. You could contact a prospective employer either by phone or by visiting the personnel office.

Whatever your approach, it is important to follow up with a phone call wherever possible or your application might simply be tucked away indefinitely.

(Sample) APPLICATION FORM

| | |
|--|--|
| PERSONAL | |
| Family Name | Given Names |
| Soc. Ins. No. | |
| Address: Number | Street City/Town Prov. |
| Phone No. Home: Business: | |
| General health, physical disability affecting employment | |
| Date of birth | |
| Day Mo. Yr. | |
| Driver's Licence | |
| Do you have use of a car? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chauffeur <input type="checkbox"/> Operator <input type="checkbox"/> None | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| EDUCATION | |
| Type of School | Name and location |
| Dates from/to | Grade/year |
| Course studied or diploma/cert./degree | Obtained |
| Yes No | |
| Secondary | |
| Trade or technical | |
| Business/commercial | |
| College/university | |
| Special skills (e.g. typing, dictaphone, shorthand, business machines) | |
| Certificates, licences, professional qualifications/memberships | |
| EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (Present or most recent positions first) | |
| Present/last employer and address | Type of business |
| Describe duties/responsibilities and significant achievement | |
| Position title | Final salary |
| Period of employment From To | May be approached for reference Yes No |
| Immediate supervisor Name & title | Phone |
| Reason for leaving | |
| Previous employer and address | Type of business |
| Describe duties/responsibilities and significant achievement | |
| Position title | Final salary |
| Period of employment From To | May be approached for reference Yes No |
| Immediate supervisor Name and Title | Phone |
| Reason for leaving | |
| OTHER INFORMATION | |
| (Detail relevant experience in volunteer/community work, travel etc.) | |

3. The Interview



The interview serves two purposes. You have the opportunity to show that you are the best person for the job and also to find out if the position and working conditions are suitable.

Before you go to an interview, find out as much as you can about the company. Its personnel department, information office or public relations office could help and there might be some material in the business section of your local library.

This information will be useful at the interview and the employer will see that you were sufficiently interested to seek it out.

The following suggestions should be helpful:

- ☐ You should have names and addresses of at least three references who are aware

they may be contacted—teachers, former employers, or people who know you well.

- ☐ Arrive on time and be prepared to complete an application form. There may also be a simple skill test.

- ☐ Remember that an interview is a business meeting. Style of dress may influence the interviewer. A neat, simple outfit is a good idea.

- ☐ Let the interviewer guide the interview but make sure that your relevant training and experience are discussed.

- ☐ Listen carefully to what the interviewer tells you about the job and don't be afraid to ask questions.

- ☐ Some people are bothered by smoke, so check with the interviewer before you light a cigarette.



☐ You will almost always be asked about your previous experience so be prepared to answer questions directly. Some interviewers may also ask personal questions about your home and family. Decide beforehand how you will reply.

☐ Make a point of your qualifications and interest in the position, rather than any financial or personal need. You may be asked what salary you expect. If you find this question difficult, ask about the salary

range for that job.

☐ Never criticize former employers.

☐ Don't overstay your welcome—watch for signs that the interview is coming to an end.

After the interview, write to thank the employer for seeing you and say that you are still interested in the position. If you don't hear anything within a few days, call the interviewer and ask if it has been filled.

4. The Job Offer



Don't be discouraged if you are not successful right away. You learn something from each interview and are better prepared for the next.

If you are successful, the employer will make a definite job offer telling you what the job involves, what your starting salary will be and when you should begin.

Don't be afraid to take a junior position if you think you can learn from it and if there is hope for advancement. It may not be all you want, but you will gain from the experience.

Keep your goals clearly in mind and remember that your first position is only the start of your career.

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